

# **ISSUE 8: FOREST PLAN AMENDMENTS TO REMOVE EXISTING STANDARDS RELATED TO TRAVEL MANAGEMENT**

## **Changes from the Draft to the Final EIS**

Very few modifications were made to this section from what was presented in the DEIS. Alternative 7 of the DEIS was replaced with Alternative 7-M in the FEIS and the discussion below was adjusted accordingly. As it relates to this issue there is no change in predicted consequences between Alternative 7 and Alternative 7-M. Beyond that changes were made to correct spelling, grammar and sentence structure.

## **Introduction**

This section addresses the potential consequences of removing 119 statements of management direction (standards) contained in the current Gallatin National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (USDA 1987). The direction proposed for removal is identified in the document, “Detailed Description of The Alternatives.” The purpose and need for amendment is discussed in Chapter 1 and Appendix A of this EIS.

The Forest Service is proposing to remove current Forest Plan direction and adopt the programmatic direction included with the proposed Travel Management Plan. The existing Forest Plan direction is outdated, does not really provide limitations on management activities, is open to misinterpretation, and/or could be in conflict with the concept of establishing travel planning areas and route-by-route management direction.

The 119 identified standards have not, in and of themselves, made project or activity-specific decisions and therefore have not resulted in ground disturbance or environmental effect. Similarly, the proposal to remove them would not directly result in ground disturbance or environmental effect. Only when site-specific projects are proposed can potential environmental consequences be meaningfully evaluated.

However, because some of these standards limit management activity or require maintenance of specific conditions, there is concern that their removal from the Forest Plan would allow the Forest Service to pursue actions that would result in greater adverse environmental effect.

In addition, the National Forest Management Act requires that, based on an analysis of the objectives, guidelines, and other contents of the Forest Plan, the Forest Supervisor determine whether a proposed amendment would result in a significant change in the Plan (36 CFR 219.10 (f)).

## Affected Environment

The Resources Planning Act (as amended by the National Forest Management Act) sets forth a process for developing, adopting and revising land and resource management plans for the National Forest System. Resultant plans are to provide multiple use and a sustained yield of goods and services from the National Forests in ways that maximize long-term net public benefits in an environmentally sound manner (36 CFR 219.1, 1982).

The Gallatin Forest Plan provides management direction at two scales: Forest-wide and by Management Area. Forest-wide direction consists of goals, objectives, standards and guidelines that apply across the Forest. At this scale, they are very broad and generally identify the goods and services that the Forest Service intends to manage for. Standards and guidelines are intended to be an indicator of policy or conduct. Management Areas are mapped zones within the Forest that have specific characteristics and capabilities that lend themselves to management for particular goods and services. For example, certain Management Areas may emphasize timber production, while others may emphasize wildlife habitat or recovery of the grizzly bear. The concept is similar to city zoning. There are 26 Management Areas distributed across the Forest. Each one contains goals that outline the management emphasis and standards that guide how each of nine resources is to be managed within that area.

All of the 119 standards proposed for replacement pertain to travel management or road and trail facilities.

Eighty-four standards fall into one or more of the following categories that do not limit or compel management action and therefore the Forest Service believes they are not needed. No concerns about removing them from the Forest Plan were identified during the scoping process and there are no identified consequences in doing so.

- 1) The standard provides procedural direction to use a certain methodology or publication in environmental analysis, or coordinate management with other agencies (e.g., analysis for transportation needs will be integrated into resource area analysis).
- 2) The standard repeats direction that already exists in laws, regulations or higher-level policy direction (e.g., rights-of-way across National Forest will be granted in situations involving a statutory right of access, subject to compliance with applicable rules and regulations of the Secretary of Agriculture).
- 3) The standard highlights a project proposal that has already been completed (e.g., the Hyalite Road will be reconstructed).
- 4) The standard provides notice to the public of possible management actions that could occur in the future (e.g., road and trail use may be restricted to meet management needs).

Thirty-five standards are proposed for removal because they would no longer be meaningful given the direction included in the proposed Travel Plan.

In the proposed Travel Plan, the Forest Service would identify specifically how each road and trail would be managed. This is in contrast to the existing Forest Plan, that gives much broader direction

under the proposed Travel Plan, the Forest Service would maintain roads and trails consistent with their specific designated uses.

Ten of the existing standards, while not necessarily in conflict with this, are not specific enough to provide meaningful direction. Examples of non-specific, broad-scale wording from the current Forest Plan (USDA Forest Service 1987) include:

- 1) *“Existing roads and trails will be maintained consistent with management area goals.”* (II-28).
- 2) *“The Forest Service investment in road and trail maintenance will be at a minimal level necessary to protect the investment and provide for soil and water protection and user safety.”* (III-6, 7).
- 3) *“Coordinate with other agencies to improve roads under their jurisdiction to achieve the goals of this management area.”* (III-14, 16).
- 4) *“Existing trails may be closed, reseeded or relocated.”* (III-8).
- 5) *“Develop trails and end-of-road facilities to provide access and disperse use throughout the area.”* (III-17, 18).
- 6) *“Conflicting recreational uses such as hiking, trail biking, horse riding, snowmobiling, and skiing may be separated or restricted in some areas.”* (III-17, 18).

These types of standards are so permissive that they have not provided guidance for management that would not have occurred in their absence. Since the Forest Plan was signed they have been seldom, if ever, referenced. Therefore it can be inferred that removal of these standards would not effect future management decisions. No concerns were identified during scoping over removing this direction from the Forest Plan and there are no identified consequences in doing so.

Concerns were raised during public scoping over the proposed removal of existing standards relating to open road density (one Forest-wide standard and one Management Area standard) and the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) (23 Management Area standards). They are the focus of the disclosure in the remainder of this section.

Forest-wide Standard 6.a.4 (Gallatin Forest Plan: II-18): *“The 1982 Elk Logging Study Annual Report contains procedures for analyzing elk habitat security as it is affected by timber harvest and road construction activities. An ‘elk effective cover’ analysis based on this report will be conducted for timber sales and effective cover ratings of at least 70 percent will be maintained during general hunting season.”*

The Forest Service proposes to remove this standard primarily because once it is determined on which routes motorized use will be allowed, the need for a road density standard becomes moot. In addition, the Forest Service has found implementation of this standard to be problematic for the following reasons:

- 1) The cover curve associated with the habitat effectiveness model was found to actually compel more timber harvest than would be realistic or desired in a given area.
- 2) There was disagreement over the analysis area on which to calculate the habitat effectiveness index (HEI) and how to include highways, city streets, switch-backed and closely parallel roads, and roads on private land.

- 3) Application of this standard only during the general hunting season largely defeated the security benefits for elk.
- 4) In many areas, the existing (or baseline) HEI was already below 70% and it often was not possible or desirable to close enough motorized routes to meet the standard. Seven times so far, this has led to the standard being amended or proposed for amendment site-specifically in conjunction with timber sales.

For more information on this standard, see Appendix G of the Darroch-Eagle Creek Timber Sale Environmental Assessment (USDA 2004).

A related standard is also being proposed for removal. In Management Area (MA) 11 there is a standard to maintain an HEI of at least 60%. This standard would be removed for the same reasons as the Forest-wide standard.

Public comments included concern that removing these standards would lead to additional road development and higher open road densities, which in turn could have an adverse effect on big game and other wildlife populations.

Standards for Recreation by Management Area (Gallatin Forest Plan, Chapter 3). Current Forest Plan standards for recreation in Management Areas 1, 2, 3, 3a, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 25 specify that recreation opportunities be managed consistent with identified Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes.

The Forest Service proposes to remove these standards for several reasons, but basically because they may not be consistent with the Travel Plan alternatives in certain areas. For example, the assigned ROS classes could be interpreted as limiting options to respond to changing recreation demands or wildlife habitat needs.

Public comments included concern that removing these standards would allow managers to add motorized routes without considering the effects it might have on the broader recreation setting. ROS is an indicator of the recreation setting provided and is affected by the presence or lack of roads and motorized trails.

## **Direct and Indirect Effects**

There are no direct environmental consequences of amending the Gallatin Forest Plan to remove 119 existing standards. The direction does not constitute project- or activity-specific decisions, and therefore does not result in ground disturbance. In addition, all but 24 of the standards proposed for amendment are redundant, permissive, or they direct use of unnecessary processes or information such that there would be no predicted consequences to removing them. Removal of two categories of standards however (24 total) would likely result in some future changes in management of roads, trails and travel across the Forest. These consequences are discussed below:

## **Elk Effective Cover- Forest-wide Standard 6.a.4 (Gallatin Forest Plan:II-18)**

This standard, as applied in the past, essentially requires that open road densities in areas of 5,000 to 15,000 acres in size be no more than 0.75 mi per sq mi after an entry for timber harvest.

### **Alternative 1 - No Action**

Under Alternative 1, there would be no amendment to the Forest Plan. The elk effective cover standard would not be removed. It can be projected that the consequences of this alternative would be similar to what has occurred over the past 15 years.

There would be on-going pressure, both within and outside the Forest Service, to reduce the amount of open roads in areas that currently do not meet 70% HEI.

Future proposals for timber harvest that require new roads would most likely occur in areas with existing road development and HEI values close to or not meeting the required 70% value. In other words, it is unlikely that there would be timber harvest and road development within inventoried roadless areas. Based on experience, the standard would, at a minimum, preclude newly-constructed roads (built to access timber stands for harvest) from remaining open for public or administrative motorized use. To meet NEPA requirements, it would also necessitate that the Forest Service consider an alternative in conjunction with timber harvest proposals that would close additional roads in an effort to bring conditions into compliance with the standard.

The confusion and debate over how to calculate HEI and/or apply the standard would continue.

The Forest Service would continue to propose and make site-specific amendments to exempt timber sales and fuels reduction projects that involve harvest from meeting the standard in areas that currently exceed it and where it is either not possible or highly undesirable to close additional road. Currently however, there are no proposed timber harvest or fuels reduction projects that would require amendment to the HEI standard. Current HEI values by TPA are identified in Table 3.8.1.

Amendments to the standard would continue to be an issue raised in appeals filed under 36 CFR 215 and in litigation.

### **Alternatives 2 through 7-M**

Under Alternatives 2 through 7-M, the elk effective cover standard would be removed from the Forest Plan. The consequences, for the most part, would be dependent on the Travel Plan alternative selected for management of specific routes. For a more detailed discussion of the predicted effects of the Travel Plan alternatives on elk, refer to Issue 2: Big Game.

Table 3.8.1 shows that HEI values would vary little among the seven alternatives. This indicates that the road that has been closed under the Forest Plan has left little open road remaining that would be in excess of the needs and desires for public and administrative vehicle access. The HEI values in the table also do not reflect total open motorized route density (i.e., motorized trails are not included), which does vary considerably between alternatives. In addition, the consequences of removing the elk effective cover standard from the Forest Plan would be as follows:

- 1) Open road density and HEI would no longer be open for debate. Road closure and decommissioning would be done in response to the proposed objectives of the travel plan for routes not designated for motorized use.
- 2) New roads proposed in conjunction with timber harvest or other projects could be constructed or opened without the need to include a road closure program and/or Forest Plan amendment regardless of the HEI value. However, the new roads would still have to be closed to public motorized use following completion of the project unless the Travel Plan was changed.
- 3) Open road density and HEI may still be calculated under NEPA analysis for specific projects but the Forest Plan would no longer require it. Wildlife biologists would determine how best to analyze potential effects to elk and other big game species.
- 4) Consistency with the elk effective cover standard would no longer be an issue for appeal or litigation, although open road density could be.

**Table 3.8. 1 Miles of open road (Forest Service and private) and HEI value, by alternative.**

Travel Planning Area	Area (acres)	Total Miles Open Road						
		Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 6	Alt. 7-M
AB Beartooth Plateau	65,747	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HEI (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
AB Wilderness	518,959	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HEI (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Bangtails	38,004	175.7	159.7	159.7	159.7	159.7	159.7	159.5
HEI (%)		40	43	43	43	43	43	43
Bear Canyon	20,533	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
HEI (%)		54	54	54	54	54	54	54
Big Sky	64,342	199.2	199.2	199.2	199.2	199.2	199.2	199.1
HEI (%)		50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Bozeman Creek	21,583	29.7	29.7	29.7	29.7	29.7	29.7	29.5
HEI (%)		65	65	65	65	65	65	65
Bridger Canyon	8,587	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8	48.8
HEI (%)		34	04	34	34	34	34	34
Cabin Creek	54,735	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	13.0	12.9
HEI (%)		93	93	93	93	93	93	93
Cherry Creek	26,684	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.1	16.2
HEI (%)		81	81	81	81	81	81	81
Cooke City	26,107	36.4	36.4	36.4	36.4	29.2	30.1	35.0
HEI (%)		64	64	64	64	70	69	65
Deer Creeks	66,937	60.6	53.6	53.6	53.6	53.6	53.6	52.8
HEI (%)		74	76	76	76	76	76	76
East Boulder	41,297	40.0	34.0	34.0	34.0	34.0	34.0	33.8
HEI (%)		72	75	75	75	75	75	75

Travel Planning Area	Area (Acres)	Total Miles Open Road						
		Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 6	Alt. 7-M
East Crazies	104,576	111.3	111.3	111.3	111.3	111.3	111.3	112.8
HEI (%)		71	71	71	71	71	71	70
Fairy Lake	23,105	72.6	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.6	70.4
HEI (%)		50	50	50	50	50	50	50
Gallatin Crest	112,350	24.4	24.4	23.7	23.7	23.7	24.4	23.7
HEI (%)		93	93	94	94	94	93	94
Gallatin River Canyon	35,517	38.2	33.2	33.2	33.2	33.2	33.2	32.8
HEI (%)		70	73	73	73	73	73	73
Gallatin Roaded	61,123	222.3	182.3	184.4	184.4	184.1	185.2	179.8
HEI (%)		47	51	51	51	51	51	51
Gardiner Basin	25,509	53.3	48.3	48.3	48.3	48.3	48.3	48.7
HEI (%)		57	58	58	58	58	58	58
Hebgen Lake Basin	57,811	158.9	151.9	150.2	150.2	146.3	150.1	141.3
HEI (%)		52	53	53	53	54	53	54
Hyalite	20,756	53.9	45.9	51.5	51.5	50.7	47.4	50.3
HEI (%)		53	56	54	54	54	55	54
Ibex	19,570	69.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5	63.5
HEI (%)		47	49	49	49	49	49	49
Lionhead	56,965	58.9	47.9	48.0	48.0	41.8	42.9	40.5
HEI (%)		71	75	75	75	77	77	78
LM Wilderness Hilgards	33,344	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HEI (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
LM Wilderness Monument	32,347	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HEI (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
LM Wilderness Spanish Peaks	68,076	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
HEI (%)		100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Main Boulder	20,671	33.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.7	32.5
HEI (%)		60	61	61	61	61	61	61
Mill Creek	74,552	110.5	98.5	98.4	98.4	98.4	98.4	100.6
HEI (%)		63	66	66	66	66	66	65
Mission	11,737	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5
HEI (%)		64	64	64	64	64	64	64
North Bridgers	33,779	72.1	70.1	70.1	70.1	70.1	70.1	69.6
HEI (%)		57	57	57	57	57	57	57
Porcupine Buffalo Horn	60,051	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
HEI (%)		99	99	99	99	99	99	99

Travel Planning Area	Area (Acres)	Total Miles Open Road						
		Alt. 1	Alt. 2	Alt. 3	Alt. 4	Alt. 5	Alt. 6	Alt. 7-M
Sawtooth	19,616	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
HEI (%)		97	97	97	97	97	97	97
Shields	38,918	86.9	73.9	73.8	73.8	73.8	74.0	73.7
HEI (%)		56	58	58	58	58	58	58
South Plateau	39,723	107.0	99.0	99.0	99.0	99.0	90.8	98.7
HEI (%)		53	54	54	54	54	55	54
Taylor Fork	76,960	59.3	58.3	58.3	58.3	58.3	58.3	58.0
HEI (%)		76	77	77	77	77	77	77
Tom Miner Rock	24,539	52.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	44.5	44.5	46.9
HEI (%)		57	58	58	58	59	59	58
West Bridgers North	23,249	12.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.1
HEI (%)		84	90	90	90	90	90	91
West Bridgers South	13,578	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
HEI (%)		98	98	98	98	98	98	98
Yankee Jim Canyon	49,587	129.5	129.5	130.9	130.9	126.0	126.0	129.1
HEI (%)		53	53	53	53	54	54	53
Yellowstone	30,383	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.8	127.4
HEI (%)		43	43	43	43	43	43	43

## Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS)

There are standards for recreation in Management Areas 1, 2, 3, 3a, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24 and 25 that specify that recreation opportunities be managed consistent with identified ROS classes.

The ROS is a classification system that provides a framework for stratifying and defining classes of outdoor recreation environments, activities and experience opportunities. There are six classes: urban, rural, roaded natural-appearing and roaded modified, semi-primitive motorized, semi-primitive non-motorized and primitive. The Forest Plan specifies the ROS class(es) to be managed for by Management Area. Definitions of these classifications can be found in the Forest Plan (USDA 1987:VI-29, VI-30).

### Alternative 1 - No Action

Under Alternative 1, the ROS standards would not be removed from the Forest Plan. Like much of the direction in the Plan, ROS was presented as an indicator of what to expect in those management areas rather than a desired condition to be achieved over the course of the planning period. For example, urban and rural settings could be expected around population centers, ski areas, and along major access roads. Roaded modified and roaded natural-appearing settings could be expected in areas where timber management has occurred or is emphasized. Primitive and semi-primitive settings could be expected in designated Wilderness and other backcountry locations.

In travel management, recreation setting would be most influenced by decisions to allow or restrict motorized use on trails. This choice would have a bearing on whether an area would provide a semi-primitive motorized recreation setting or a semi-primitive non-motorized setting. The Forest Plan standards however, do not distinguish between the two. For example:

The standard for the undeveloped Management Areas outside of designated Wilderness (including MA 3, 3a, 6, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 24) states: “*Recreation Opportunity Spectrum classes are semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive non-motorized.*” Therefore, the existing Forest Plan ROS standards provide little guidance for travel management. Under Alternative 1, this scenario would be the same in the future. Future decisions could be made to allow or restrict motorized use of trails in non-Wilderness areas, regardless of the Forest Plan ROS standards.

### **Alternatives 2 through 7-M**

Under Alternatives 2 through 7-M, the ROS standards would be removed from the Forest Plan. The consequences, for the most part, would be dependent on the Travel Plan alternative selected for management of specific routes. The Recreation Issue of this document discloses the resultant ROS settings that would be provided under each of the seven alternatives.

In addition, future decisions could be made to add trails or change the designated uses of existing trails without landscape-level Forest Plan direction to provide a specified recreation setting. In public comments, many users emphasized the importance of a primitive or semi-primitive non-motorized setting in providing quality hiking opportunities. Neither the existing Forest Plan nor Alternatives 2-6 and 7-M would provide direction to maintain this type of setting in specific areas.

On the other hand, including a standard that zones the Forest to provide and maintain certain recreation settings could make future travel management decisions more difficult. Over the past 17 years under the existing Forest Plan, issues have emerged over the potential effects of motorized use and motorized route density on the grizzly bear, lynx and wolverine. Recreation demand has increased to the point where the land is no longer capable of providing for all uses in all areas. In the likely event that similar issues emerge over the next 10-15 years, an ROS standard that designates an area as semi-primitive motorized, or any of the roaded settings, could conflict with identified needs to close routes to motorized use.

Alternatives 2 through 7-M propose to designate the roads and trails that would be open to motorized use. Therefore, changing the permanent management of a specific route would require a new decision to change the Travel Management Plan and this would first require environmental analysis under NEPA. It is reasonable to assume that this analysis would identify and consider any changes to recreation settings that would occur as a result. In other words, even though the Forest Plan would not contain a standard that specifies maintenance of various recreation settings in designated areas, future managers would be informed on the effects of their travel management decisions on recreation users.

## **Cumulative Effects**

The elk effective cover and ROS standards of the existing Forest Plan relate primarily to roads and motorized use of the Gallatin National Forest. The potential consequences of removing these

standards are discussed above. Removing these standards may seemingly appear to relax restrictions, thus allowing more of the Forest to become open to motorized use in the future, but from a cumulative perspective, this would not be the case. The amendments to the Forest Plan to remove this direction are connected actions to the proposals for management of specific roads and trails. This will be the principal decision that determines which routes will be open and which will have restrictions to motorized use. In addition, the proposed Travel Plan, under Alternatives 2 through 7-M, would adopt a series of new goals, objectives, standards and guidelines that would limit potential increases in motorized use. In particular, proposed Forest-wide standards M-8 and M-9 under Alternatives 2-6 and D-5 and D-6 under Alternative 7-M specify no increase in summer public motorized routes and that temporary roads constructed for project activity be permanently closed following completion of the activity. Existing Forest Plan direction, through Amendment 19 as well as proposed standard F-1 under Alternatives 2-6, also require that any new motorized route constructed within the grizzly bear recovery zone to be offset by closure of another motorized route of equal or greater length. Future adoption of conservation strategies for the grizzly bear and lynx could also restrict future motorized routes and use. Recently, the Forest Service nationally proposed a regulation that would prohibit summer motorized use off routes unless otherwise designated. This proposal mimics the Montana/Dakota OHV decision made by the Northern Regional Forester in January of 2001.

Alternative 1 would not restrict summer motorized use to designated routes beyond those areas that were already restricted on the Gallatin National Forest Recreation Visitor Map (1999). If this alternative were selected, there would be a conscious decision to designate areas as open to off-route travel. There would also be additional routes currently suitable only for motorcycles that would become legally open to ATVs as well. The Forest Plan would not be amended to remove existing direction. Future motorized use and routes would be limited by the Forest Plan elk effective cover standard, Forest Plan Amendment 19 that restricts increased motorized route density in the Grizzly Bear Recovery Zone, and possibly by the Conservation Strategies for the bear and lynx. If no Travel Plan decision is reached, or if it is turned back in appeal or litigation, there would be no change in the Forest Plan and future management of routes would be similar as described for Alternative 2. Single-track motorcycle routes would not be legally open to ATVs under the Montana/Dakota OHV decision since areas would not be designated as open to off-route travel.

Lack of a travel management decision (as well as a decision selecting Alternative 1) would also likely lead to additional project-specific amendments to the elk effective cover standard. A discussion of the potential cumulative effects of multiple amendments of this standard can be found in Appendix G of the Darroch/Eagle Creek Timber Sale Environmental Assessment (USDA 2004), which is hereby incorporated by reference. The predicted cumulative effects of motorized routes under the Travel Plan alternatives to elk and the recreation setting can be found under the Big Game and Recreation Issues of this EIS.

## **Consistency with Laws, Regulations, Policy, and Federal, Regional, State and Local Land Use Plans (including the Forest Plan)**

The NFMA regulations contain a provision that allows for amending Forest Plans [36 CFR 219.10(f), 1982]. The Forest Service is proposing amendment to remove direction that is outdated, does not effectively provide limitations on management activities, is open to misinterpretation,

and/or could be in conflict with the concept of establishing forest-wide, travel planning area and route-by-route management direction. For amendments, the NFMA regulations require the decision-maker (the Gallatin Forest Supervisor) to determine whether the proposal would result in a significant change to the Plan based on an analysis of the objectives, guidelines and other contents of the Plan. If the amendment is determined not significant, then the Forest Supervisor may implement the amendment following appropriate public notification and satisfactory completion of NEPA procedures. If the amendment is determined significant, the Forest Service should follow the same procedure as that required for development of a Forest Plan. One way to determine significance is to assess the magnitude of change resulting from the proposed amendment to the goods and services projected to be provided by the Forest Plan. The goods and services to be considered include recreation, scenery, water, fish and wildlife habitat, threatened and endangered species habitat, timber, livestock forage, fire protection and cultural resources. Information on the effects of the Travel Plan alternatives on these goods and services is discussed throughout this Chapter.